

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated March 23, 2009, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-4, 7-13, and 18 are hereby amended. Claims 14 and 15 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer for the subject matter contained therein. No claims have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-13, and 16-21 are currently pending for prosecution on the merits. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

The Specification has been objected to because the Abstract of the disclosure was not presented on a sheet separate from any other text. Office Action at p. 2. Applicants point out that the instant application was filed under 35 U.S.C. § 371. While the MPEP 608.01(b) generally requires that “[t]he abstract must commence on a separate sheet” it is also noted, in the same section of the MPEP, “that the abstract for a national stage application filed under 35 U.S.C. 371 may be found on the front page of the Patent Cooperation Treaty publication (i.e., pamphlet). See MPEP § 1893.03(e).” Accordingly, Applicants assert that the format of the Abstract here is proper, and request withdrawal of the objection to the Specification

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 13-14, and 18-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by UK Patent Application GB 2 265 158 to Ioku (hereinafter *Ioku*). Office Action at p. 2. Claim 14 has been canceled, thus the rejection of this claim is now moot.

Regarding claims 1, 2, and 5-7, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and assert that *Ioku* fails to disclose a “remote control system for controlling multiple home appliances, comprising... [a] monitoring device comprising: a microcomputer adapted to process the data received from the remote controller or any of the plurality of home appliances to ensure the data correctly reaches an intended destination, and to control an operation of at least one of the plurality of home appliances according to a command transmitted from the remote controller; and a data storage unit to store data received from the remote controller or the at least one of the plurality of home appliances,” as recited in independent claim 1.

The Office admits that *Ioku* fails to disclose “a microprocessor and data storage unit for storing data.” Office Action at p. 3. Accordingly, *Ioku* fails to anticipate the invention as recited in independent claim 1.

Regarding claim 13, Applicants respectfully assert that *Ioku* fails to disclose a “remote control system for home appliance, comprising... a communication device having a signal processing unit for exchanging data between the monitoring device and the home appliance, wherein the communication device exchanges data with the monitoring device through an infrared communication module and exchanges data with the home appliance through a power line network,” as recited in independent claim 13.

The Office asserts that *Ioku* discloses an operation panel/monitoring device 5 and a transmitter/remote 4 received in the operation panel 5. Office Action at pp. 2-3. The Office then asserts that the remote controller 4, comprises “an infrared communication module for transmitting data to the monitoring device.” Office Action at p. 3. The purported infrared communication module of the remote controller 4 of *Ioku* is, however, different from the “communication device” of the claimed invention.

In *Ioku* the purported infrared communication module is disposed within the remote controller 4 to transmit data to monitoring device 5, which is connected directly to the washing machine 1. The disclosed remote controller 10 of the disclosed embodiments of the present invention also has an infrared transmitter so that the remote controller 10 can communicate with the monitoring device 20. However, a communication device 50 is further disclosed for communication between the monitoring device 20 and the appliances 30, 40.

More specifically, as disclosed, a washer 30 and dryer 40, each having a power line modem, are connected with a communication device 50 via a power line network PL. Specification at ¶¶ [0061-0062]. The user may input control command data at the remote controller 10, which is wirelessly transmitted to the monitoring device 20, where it may be displayed, and then transmitted to the communication device 50 in the wireless communication scheme. Specification at ¶¶ [0053], [0056-0064] & See FIGs. 6-8. Further, “the communication device 50 receives the control command from the monitoring device 20, and transmits it to the [predetermined appliance, and also] receives the operation state and operation result of the

washing machine 30 or the dryer 40 based on the control command... and transmits them to the monitoring device 20 in the infrared communication scheme.” Specification at ¶ [0063]. The communication device further comprises a signal processing unit 51, that “allows the [command] data, which is received from the power line communication module 52 or infrared communication module 53, to be transmitted to their destinations, and enables the communication between the different communication media.” Specification at ¶ [0069].

Thus, in the disclosed embodiments of the present invention the communication device 50 is an intermediary device between the monitoring device 20 and the appliances 30, 40 to facilitate a wireless communication scheme. *Ioku* wholly fails to teach or suggest such a communication device, “having a signal processing unit for exchanging data between the monitoring device and the home appliance, wherein the communication device exchanges data with the monitoring device through an infrared communication module and exchanges data with the home appliance through a power line network,” as recited in independent claim 13.

Finally regarding claims 18-21, Applicants respectfully assert that *Ioku* fails to disclose a remote control method for home appliance comprising, at least, “transmitting the operation condition received by the monitoring device to a communication device connected to the home appliance via a cable; transmitting the operation condition received by the communication device to the home appliance so that the home appliance operates in accordance with the operation condition,” as recited in independent claim 18.

Further to the above discussion with regard to claim 13, *Ioku* fails to disclose at least a communication device for communication between the monitoring device 20 and the appliances 30, 40. Therefore, *Ioku* wholly fails to anticipate the method recited in claim 18.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 13, and 18 are patentably distinguishable over *Ioku*. Claims 2, 5-7, and 19-21, which depend from either independent claim 1 or 18, are also patentably distinguishable for at least the same reasons as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-7, 13, and 18-21.

The Office has rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ioku* in view of U.S. Patent 5,579,496 to Van Steenbrugge (hereinafter *Van Steenbrugge*). Office Action at p. 3.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and assert that *Ioku* and *Van Steenbrugge*, alone or in combination, fail to disclose a “remote control system for controlling multiple home appliances, comprising... [a] monitoring device comprising: a microcomputer adapted to process the data received from the remote controller or any of the plurality of home appliances to ensure the data correctly reaches an intended destination, and to control an operation of at least one of the plurality of home appliances according to a command transmitted from the remote controller; and a data storage unit to store data received from the remote controller or the at least one of the plurality of home appliances,” as recited in independent claim 1.

While the Office admits that *Ioku* fails to disclose a microprocessor and data storage unit, it attempts to cure this deficiency with a purported teaching in *Van Steenbrugge*. Office Action at pp. 3-4. *Van Steenbrugge*, however, discloses that each apparatus in a system has its own microprocessor 21, 31, and 41 to control the functions of each individual apparatus. *Van Steenbrugge* at col. 3, ll. 32-38.

In the disclosed embodiments of the present invention, however, a single microcomputer 21, having a data processing unit 21a and an input/output control unit 21b, is provided in the monitoring device 20 for multiple apparatuses. Specification at ¶ [0039]. This allows for the operation data of multiple apparatuses to be processed and displayed at a single monitoring device 20 and thus transmitted to remote controller 10. Specification at ¶¶ [0040-0041]. Further, “data processing unit 21a controls the data... to be correctly transmitted to their destinations.” Specification at ¶ [0041]. *Van Steenbrugge* wholly fails to teach or suggest such a configuration.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over *Ioku* and *Van Steenbrugge*. Claims 3 and 4, which depend from independent claim 1, are also patentably distinguishable for at least the same reasons as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 3-4.

The Office has rejected claims 8-12, 15, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ioku* in view of U.S. Patent 2,265,158 to Daum et al. (hereinafter *Daum*). Office Action at p. 4. Claim 15 has been canceled, thus the rejection of this claim is now moot.

Applicants respectfully assert that, as discussed above, *Ioku* and *Daum*, alone or in combination, fail to disclose a “remote control system for controlling multiple home appliances, comprising... [a] monitoring device comprising: a microcomputer adapted to process the data received from the remote controller or any of the plurality of home appliances to ensure the data correctly reaches an intended destination, and to control an operation of at least one of the plurality of home appliances according to a command transmitted from the remote controller; and a data storage unit to store data received from the remote controller or the at least one of the plurality of home appliances,” as recited in independent claim 1. Applicants further assert that *Ioku* and *Daum*, alone or in combination, fail to disclose a “remote control system for home appliance, comprising... a communication device having a signal processing unit for exchanging data between the monitoring device and the home appliance, wherein the communication device exchanges data with the monitoring device through an infrared communication module and exchanges data with the home appliance through a power line network,” as recited in independent claim 13.

Daum fails to cure the above discussed deficiencies of *Ioku*. In fact, *Daum* was set forth by the Office for purportedly teaching a power line modem.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 13 is patentably distinguishable over *Ioku* and *Daum*. Claims 8-12, and 16, which depend from independent claims 1 and 13, respectively, are also patentably distinguishable for at least the same reasons as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 8-12, and 16.

The Office has rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ioku* in view of *Daum*, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,570,085 to Bertsch hereinafter Bertsch). Office Action at p. 4.

Applicants respectfully assert that, as discussed above, *Ioku*, *Daum*, and *Bertsch*, alone or in combination, fail to disclose a “remote control system for home appliance, comprising... a communication device having a signal processing unit for exchanging data between the monitoring device and the home appliance, wherein the communication device exchanges data with the monitoring device through an infrared communication module and exchanges data with the home appliance through a power line network,” as recited in independent claim 13.

Bertsch fails to cure the above discussed deficiencies of *Ioku*. In fact, *Bertsch* was set forth by the Office for purportedly teaching a power line and a communication cable.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 13 is patentably distinguishable over *Ioku*, *Daum*, and *Bertsch*. Claim 17, which depends from independent claim 13, is also patentably distinguishable for at least the same reasons as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 17

CONCLUSION

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the

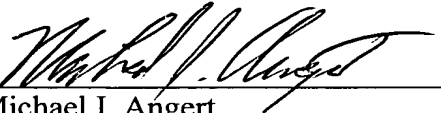
Application No. 10/573,912
Amendment dated June 23, 2009
Reply to Office Action dated March 23, 2009

Docket No. 9988.310.00

filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 23, 2009

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